



# Ola Lokahi

Creating a Healthy Hawaii Together

**MARCH  
2018**

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**Ola Lokahi** is published  
by the DOH  
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*The mission of the Department of Health is to protect and improve the health and environment for all people in Hawaii. We believe that an optimal state of physical, mental, social and environmental well-being is a right and responsibility of all of Hawaii's people.*

## DOH Quality Assurance Coordinator Inducted Into UH Nursing Alumni Hall of Fame

**T**he University of Hawaii-Manoa Nursing Alumni Association has inducted Gloria Fernandez, Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) quality assurance coordinator, into its 2018 Alumni Hall of Fame.

Fernandez earned a master's degree from UH in 2011 and a doctorate in 2015. She was chosen for her outstanding achievements, service and dedication to the nursing profession, advancing health-care and spreading the Aloha Spirit.

Fernandez, who was formerly a DOH public health nurse supervisor, is responsible for overseeing the delivery of nursing services for residents from Waipahu to Makaha. She previously worked as a public health nurse in Waianae and Nanakuli for 10 years, conducting health assessments and administering vaccines to keep the public healthy and strong.

"Gloria has dedicated herself to serving the community in the field and as a supervisor," said Joan Takamori, DOH Public Health Nursing Branch chief. "She has incorporated health literacy into our nursing practice to better support our communities and is now helping to shape the Public Health Nursing Branch into a

program that incorporates a 'sense of place' into the work that we do."

Living aloha and perpetuating the Hawaiian culture have helped to hone Fernandez's nursing skills.



*Gloria Fernandez (wearing lei) with (from left) Joan Takamori, DOH Public Health Nursing Branch chief; Jodie Sanada, West Honolulu PHN section supervisor; and Toni Torres, Kauai PHN supervisor.*

"It keeps me humble and ensures that I listen to the needs of the community," she said. "My Hawaiian culture keeps me grounded, encourages relationships and builds trust."

She also provided consultation for the development of nutrition and exercise toolkits for residents in homeless shelters, worked with Project 52—a program that supports disaster preparedness training for the community—and volunteers her time for Waipahu

High School's Academy of Health & Sciences and for the Alignment 96792 Health and Wellness Committee Collaboration.

Fernandez and her husband have raised five children in a happy home in Waianae, with the youngest currently a sophomore at Waipahu High School. She is proud of her family's roots in Waianae Valley and in her spare time enjoys being a soccer mom and grandmother.

"I love that this community can pull together in the toughest of times and take care of each other," she said. "Growing up in Waianae meant that you were humble, generous, caring, compassionate and a hard worker."

# ‘Day at the Capitol’ Celebrates Abilities of People With Developmental Disabilities

**M**ore than 400 individuals with developmental disabilities, their family members, and service providers from all islands participated in the 18th annual Day at the Capitol on March 15, 2018. The event highlighted national Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in March and provided hands-on opportunities for participants to meet legislators in person, learn about the legislative process, and network with others.

Individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members can sometimes face enormous challenges in accessing needed support services. Events such as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month help raise public awareness about the rights of individuals with a developmental disability to live independently, exert control over their own lives, and to actively participate in the community through full integration and inclusion. This year’s national theme for the annual observance is “See Me for Me.”

“When we look past the disability and recognize our similarities, everyone benefits,” said Mary Brogan, Hawaii Department of Health Developmental Disabilities Division administrator. “Our goal is to raise public awareness of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities who live, work, play, vote and volunteer in our community, and who make meaningful contributions to society every day.”

The day-long event included a signing ceremony by Gov. David Ige,



*Gov. David Ige with (standing, from left): Renee Manfredi, Self Advocacy Advisory Council president; Daintry Bartoldus, Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities administrator; and Mary Brogan, DOH Developmental Disabilities Division administrator; (seated): Patricia Morrissey, Center on Disability Studies director.*

who proclaimed March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in Hawaii. He urged all citizens to recognize the abilities and contributions of people with developmental disabilities, and to engage and encourage them in their endeavors. Participants from Maui, Molokai, Oahu, Kauai, and Hawaii Island attended the proclamation signing.

“Communities are made stronger when everyone is treated with respect and dignity, and empowered to live self-determined lives,” said Patricia Morrissey, director of the Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Daintry Bartoldus, Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities administrator, added “Honoring our diversity and the contributions of those with developmental disabilities enriches our state and signifies Hawaii’s commitment to equal opportunity, equal access, and equal rights for all.”

The “Day at the Capitol” was sponsored by DOH Developmental Disabilities Division, the Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

An estimated 22,600 people in Hawaii have a developmental disability that substantially restricts their ability to function in several major life activities. Some disabilities may be obvious, for instance requiring the use of a wheelchair. On the other hand, some disabilities—such as cognitive impairments that affect the way a person speaks, learns, or interacts—may not be as easily recognizable or identifiable.

The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act defines a developmental disability as a severe, chronic disability which is attributable to a mental or physical impairment that substantially restricts the individual’s functioning in several major life activities and requires support services that are of lifelong or extended duration. Examples include autism, traumatic brain injury, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome.

For information about the Department of Health’s Developmental Disabilities Division and resources for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in Hawaii, go to <http://health.hawaii.gov/ddd/>.

For information on the Center for Disability Studies visit <https://www.cds.hawaii.edu>, and to find out more about Councils on Developmental Disabilities go to <https://nacdd.org/>.



# Health News & Tidbits

## DOH NURSE RECOGNIZED FOR WORK WITH ELDERLY



Mary Gadam

Mary Gadam, a public health nurse for DOH Windward Nursing Section, was recently recognized as an “End of Fall” Star Honoree for her dedication to senior fall

prevention programs that reduce the number and severity of injuries from falls. The award is presented annually by the Hawaii Fall Prevention Consortium and the DOH EMS and Injury Prevention System Branch.

Gadam works with the elderly and their caregivers, providing consultation and advice on preventing falls and helping them to live safely at home for as long as possible.

“For over 20 years, Mary has advocated for a better quality of life for the elderly, taken the initiative in elder health issues and worked with numerous agencies that support elder health,” said Joan Takamori, DOH Public Health Nursing Branch chief.

Stan Michaels, DOH Fall Prevention coordinator, said Gadam’s efforts to educate the public about fall risk and what seniors can do to prevent injuries from falls are making a big difference.

“Mary’s work to prevent falls benefits the elderly who need help the most,” Michaels said. “I’m very impressed with her compassion, dedication and kindness for our kupuna.”

## STATE EXTENDS COUNSELING SERVICES FOR EMPLOYEES

If you are facing personal struggles or simply need someone to talk with, help is available with the Resource for Employee Assistance & Counseling

Help (REACH). The program provides confidential, short-term professional counseling services to state employees experiencing personal problems that may affect their job performance. The services are free for up to a maximum of three sessions. WorkLife Hawaii has been contracted to provide employee assistance services through a voluntary program that permits employees to seek help on their own. Their services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for the duration of the contract.

To set up an appointment, call WorkLife Hawaii at 543-8445 or 1-800-994-3571 from the Neighbor Islands. Office hours are Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. After business hours, call 1-800-994-3571. Appointments are also available during evenings and Saturday mornings.

## 2018 HAWAII FOOD BANK DRIVE



The Hawaii Food Bank has launched its 2018 campaign through May 19 and DOH employees are asked to do their part to help eliminate hunger in Hawaii by making donations of canned goods or cash.

The top five most needed foods include canned proteins (meat, tuna, chicken), canned meals (stew, spaghetti, chili), canned vegetables, canned fruits and rice. For those who prefer making a monetary donation, \$10 cash will ensure enough food for 25 meals. Contributions can also be made online.

The theme color for this year’s drive is orange, which symbolizes hunger. To make a contribution, contact departmental coordinators Gayle Ogawa or Jennifer Ching at [gayle.ogawa@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:gayle.ogawa@doh.hawaii.gov) or [jennifer.ching@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:jennifer.ching@doh.hawaii.gov), respectively.

## NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

As part of National Public Health Week, DOH Director Dr. Virginia Pressler will be the featured speaker at a special event at the UH Cancer Center's Sullivan Conference Center on April 5. Dr. Pressler will tell the story of Hawaii Ohana Nui Project Expansion (HOPE)—a public health project designed to build healthy communities and support healthy families. To register for the event, go to: <http://hawaiipublichealth.org/event-2819217/Registration>.

National Public Health Week is a growing movement to create the healthiest nation in one generation through advocating for healthy and fair policies, sharing strategies for successful partnerships and championing the role of a strong public health system.

## WALK @ WORK WEDNESDAYS

Ever experience a lack of focus and energy during the afternoons? If so, taking a brisk walk during your lunch hour may be the remedy. To help employees boost their productivity as well as improve their health and well-being, DOH has organized a walking group that will hold its first session on April 4 from 12 noon to 12:30 pm.

For those interested, meet at Kinau Hale’s rear parking lot, wear comfortable clothing and sun protection and bring enough water for the 1-mile route. The first 20 participants who complete 3 sessions will receive a pedometer, compliments of the Kaiser Permanente health plan. The lunch walk is part of the department’s “Start Living Healthy @ Work” program.

